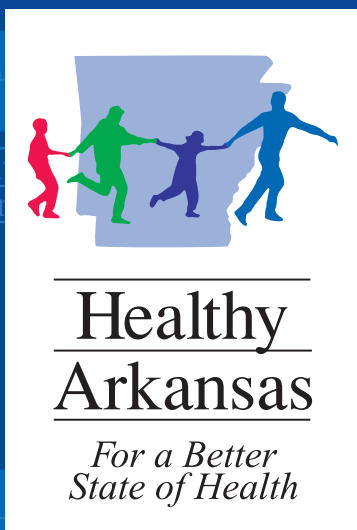


Physical Activity



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Fast Facts about Physical Activity

- 55.3% of Arkansans fail to meet recommendations for moderate or vigorous activity.
- Despite the proven benefits of being physically active, more than 28% of American adults report no leisure-time physical activity.
- Physical activity can make you feel more energetic, sleep better and control your appetite.
- Physical activity helps prevent being overweight and obese, and is important in maintaining weight loss.
- Physical activity helps prevent heart disease, helps control blood pressure, cholesterol levels and diabetes, slows bone loss associated with advancing age, lowers the risk of certain cancers and helps reduce anxiety and depression.
- According to the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention (CDC), participants in a major clinical trial exercised at moderate intensity, usually by walking an average of 30 minutes a day, five days a week and lowered their intake of fat and calories. This resulted in a weight loss of about 10 to 15 pounds, reducing their risk of getting diabetes by 58%.
- All adults should accumulate at least 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, and preferably all, days of the week. If there isn't time for a continuous 30-minutes some days, even three 10-minute segments daily will provide benefits.

Opportunities for Employers

- Offer employees 20 minutes per day, on company time to walk.
- Encourage employees to take the stairs instead of the elevator by making the stairwells safe and aesthetically pleasing.
- Create a walking path outside, or mark a course inside the building, with directional signs and distance displayed, so people can determine how far they have traveled.

- Offer health club discounts paid by the employer.
- Install bike racks at your worksite.
- Make pedometers available for employee use.
- Encourage stretching breaks at meetings and workstations.
- Create departmental competitions for miles walked, weight lost or minutes of physical activity.
- Organize company Olympics to encourage physical activity and team-building.
- Display signage and materials around the workplace encouraging employees to be active, providing information on the benefits of physical activity and practical ideas for incorporating activity into their lives.

Model Programs

Out for Lunch is a worksite physical activity event sponsored by the Arkansas Governor's Council on Fitness. Employees are encouraged to walk to a central location, where they receive a healthy snack and drink (donated by food companies) from volunteers, then walk back to work. Get more information about this program and other physical activity information at: www.arkansasfitness.com

The Arkansas Department of Health's **5 A Day Program** provides employers with a program called Worksite Challenge: Fit With 5. It is a 10-week program for the workplace that focuses on increasing physical activity and eating more fruits and vegetables. For more information, contact Christine Stachowiak, 5 A Day Program Coordinator, at 1-800-235-0002 or (501) 280-4168. www.healthylarkansas.com/services/services_5aday.html

The 10,000 Steps Program, sponsored by Shape Up America! Using a pedometer, it's a relatively simple program that can be done by one or many. Get a program kit from their web site: www.shapeup.org.

Fitness Fundamentals, a basic physical activity instructional program sponsored by the President's Council on Physical Fitness, provides comprehensive, beginning-to-end, information on developing an exercise program. This information can be found on the Council's website at fitness.gov/fitness.

Active For Life is an American Cancer Society physical activity program for worksites. It's a 10-week program that encourages employees to be more active on a regular basis by setting individual goals and forming teams for motivation and support. For information, call the Arkansas Chapter of the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or (501) 444-3480. www.cancer.org.

March Into May is a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) worksite physical activity program. Using individual and team log sheets, worksite departments compete as teams to see who accumulates the most points during the 12-week program. Periodic newsletters are circulated to departments, giving progress reports, feature articles on teams and health tips.

www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/conference/archive/conf14/1990abastractbook.pdf See session 3.

America on the Move (AOTM) is a nationwide initiative designed to promote active living and healthy eating in order to stop weight gain and the many health complications that result from being overweight. www.americaonthemove.org



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